

## **BUSINESS MATTERS: MIDTERM ONE**

- ➤ Midterm papers must be uploaded to OneDrive by **5 pm** on **Friday, October 25**.
  - ➤ NOTE: Professor Greene is NOT AVAILABLE on Thursday, October 24.



# **PROFESSOR GREENE ON WRITING**

Tips of the Sociological Trade

## WHAT DO I WANT?

- ➤ Well-written papers.
- ➤ I want to engage your brilliant ideas; not line-edit your papers!
- ➤ A 5-page paper should take me **20 minutes** to read and grade, including comments.
  - ➤ Average time to grade 2202's Place Profiles: 45 minutes!
- ➤ I want a paper with a focused, clear thesis (argument, takeaway) that you develop throughout the paper.
  - ➤ I want a paper where each paragraph develops an aspect of your argument.

    ONE MAJOR IDEA per paragraph.
  - ➤ I want a paper in which I can summarize your argument in no more than two sentences.

#### **WEAK VS. STRONG VERBS**

- ➤ Forms of weak verbs ("to be") can help create subtle distinctions of agency, action, and tense.
  - ightharpoonup e.g. "I was made to feel inferior." (different from "She made me feel inferior."
  - ➤ e.g. "I was going shopping." (different from "I go shopping." or "I shopped.")
- ➤ Excessive use of weak verbs ("to be") invite sloppy syntax.
  - ➤ e.g. "What is interesting about these data is the fact that Portland, Maine saw an increase of African Americans over the last twenty years.
  - ➤ instead: These data reveal an increase of African-American residents in Portland, Maine within the last twenty years.
- ➤ RULE: Limit your use of weak verbs to no more than two per paragraph.

### **MODIFYING AND ABSTRACTING GOOD VERBS**

- ➤ Sometimes, weak verbs transform good action verbs into modifiers.
  - ➤ e.g. "The data are describing" instead of "The data describe . . . "
  - ➤ e.g. "The town was risking . . ." instead of the "The town risks . . ."
  - e.g. "The land was discovered by white people . . ." instead of "White people discovered the land."
  - ➤ e.g. "Los Angeles is bordered by . . ." instead of "Los Angeles borders . . ."
  - ➤ e.g. "New York was struggling economically by the mid-1970s . . ."

► Description ratios removes around an action from a service service.	
<ul> <li>Passive voice removes agency an action from a sentence.</li> <li>e.g. Native Americans were forced out of the territory by Dutch settlers in</li> </ul>	
1910.	
➤ Dutch settlers forced Native Americans out of the territory in 1910.	
➤ e.g. I was impressed by the way Professor Greene called me out on my writing.	
➤ The way that Professor Greene called me out on my writing impressed me.	
USE OF WEAK VERBS/PASSIVE VOICE	
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➤ RULE: You should not use more than two weak (be-) verbs per paragraph.	
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### **USE OF CONTRACTIONS**

- ➤ RULE: Unless used in dialogue, do not use contractions in a formal paper you submit for me.
  - ➤ Analytic papers require a formal tone; contractions
  - ➤ Students often mistake contracted forms for possessives.
    - ➤ It's/its; their/they're/there
      - ➤ e.g. Augusta's city council passed it's ordinance in 2010.
- ➤ Make it easy on yourself. It does not take any longer to write "it is" or "do not" than it does to write "it's" or "don't."

### **SUBJECT-VERB AGREEMENT**

- ➤ The word "data" is the plural form of datum. It takes a plural verb.
  - ➤ The data reveal that African Americans . . . .
  - ➤ These data reveal
- ➤ The word "phenomena" is the plural form of "phenomenon." It, too, takes a plural verb.
  - $\succ$  These phenomena illuminate . . .
  - ➤ This phenomenon
- ➤ Beware of prepositional and modifying phrases between subjects and modifying verbs. The verb should agree with the subject, not the prepositional phrase.
  - > The windows of the world are covered in rain.
  - ➤ The reading that the professors describe is available online.
- > BUT, as a general rule, the subject and verb should not be too far from each other in a sentence anyway.

## **WASTE WORDS**

- ➤ RULE: You should use these phrases sparingly. They often carry weak verbs and serve to bloat your sentences.
  - ➤ "One of the things that this book describes is how culture shapes community."
  - > This book (you should actually name the book) describes how culture shapes community.
    - ➤ "There are many reasons why . . ."
    - ➤ "There is a rule that . . ."
    - ➤ "In order to . . . "
    - ➤ "It appears that . . ."
    - ➤ "I believe . . . " "I feel . . . "





## **COMMON MISTAKES IN ESSAY ONE**

- ➤ "Lacking clarity and focus"
  - ➤ Wandering (sentence, paragraph, argument).
  - ➤ NO MORE ONE PAGE PARAGRAPHS!!!
  - ➤ SENTENCES SHOULD NOT BE 100 WORDS LONG.
  - ➤ AVOID ADDITIONAL CLAUSES THAT CONFUSE MORE THAN CLARIFY.
- ➤ The tendency for abstraction.
  - ➤ The absence of concrete data to support analysis.
  - > Scenarios that confuse more than illuminate.
  - ➤ USE THE READINGS TO SUPPORT YOUR CLAIMS.
- ➤ The tendency for exhaustion.
  - $\,\blacktriangleright\,$  Summarizing readings (or aspects of readings that do not advance your OWN argument).
    - ➤ BE STRATEGIC AND JUDICIOUS. USE ONLY WHAT MOBILIZES THE POINT YOU WANT TO MAKE.

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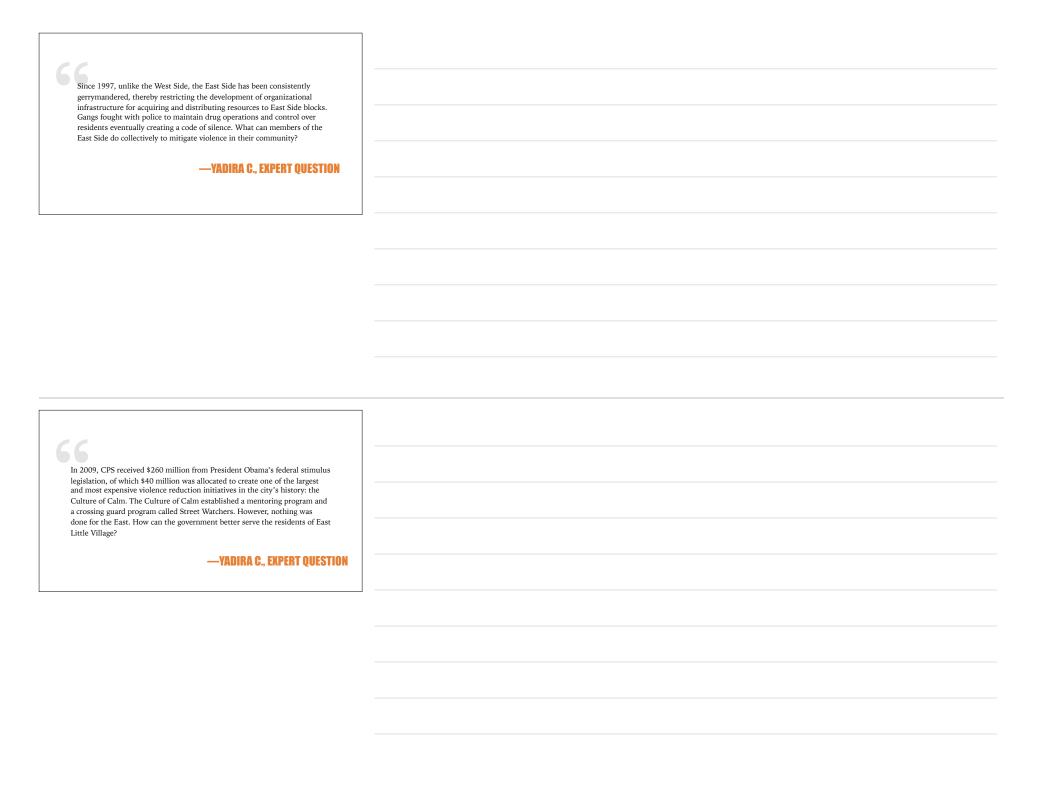
### PREVIOUSLY...

#### ➤ LAST WEEK:

- ➤ Community Saved Theory
  - > THRUST: Individuals do not wander in a vast metropolis. Rather, they develop kinship and common values.
  - ➤ A loss of community in one dimension (ecological, socio-structural, cultural symbolic) does not mean an complete "loss of community.
  - ➤ Communities are integral for identity production and maintenance.
    - · street corner societies
    - codes of the street (decent vs. street families)
    - alliances between decent and street families (Pattillo)

### ➤ LAST WEEK:

- ➤ Theories of Collective Efficacy: a neighborhood-level process involving both the willingness of individuals in a neighborhood to work together toward a common goal and mutual trust.
  - ➤ requires a sense of working trust and social interaction.
  - ➤ yet it is <u>not</u> necessarily dependent on deep, affective relationship (strong ties) among neighborhoods or institutional agents.
- ➤ Robert Vargas, Wounded City
  - ➤ Do the residents of Little Village exercise collective efficacy? How do they exercise social control?



PREVIOUSLY	
I III I I I I I I I I I I I I I I I I	
➤ Professor Medford — Bates College	
➤ What are some of the takeaways from her lecture?	
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➤ Classic Assimilation Model (The Chicago School)	
➤ straight-line (linear) convergence - immigrants become similar over time in	
norms, behaviors, values and characteristics of host society	
later generations will show greater similarities with majority group than previous generations.	
THEORIES OF ASSIMILATION	
➤ Segmented Assimilation Theory:	
➤ Two trajectories:	
➤ Upward Assimilation: leading toward the socioeconomic status, family	
<ul> <li>Upward Assimilation: leading toward the socioeconomic status, family structure, fertility, and martial features common to the majority of</li> </ul>	
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A recurring pattern we have observed in marginalized, poor, and mostly non-White communities is the existence of intra-group conflict — specifically, due to the "good" attempting to distinguish themselves from the "bad" of Monday, Professor Medford described the perception of "deserving" versus "undeserving" immigrants by both natives and immigrants. In Golden Valley, those with work ethic or moral capital used it to separate themselves from those with poor coping habits and those on governmental support. We also witness this dichotomy in Los Angeles. Due to the city's conditional police enforcement and competition at work, there is a motive for "good" immigrants to separate themselves from those who are lazy, drink, and "act Mexican/Indian."

Is it fair for "good" immigrants to place blame on the "bad" for unemployment or deportations? Should it be "good" immigrants' responsibility to help others assimilate? How can ally non-profits intervene to disrupt this good/bad binary?"  $\frac{1}{2} \frac{1}{2} \frac{1}{$ 

—Brandon L., Expert Question

Connecting the lecture from Professor Medford and chapter 2 of Undocumented Politics, the "good" minority and the "bad" minority argument seems to set the scene for whether immigrants feel appreciative or cynical towards the United States "Good" and "Bad" behavior is a very arbitrary way to describe threats to violence and deportation. Andrews states immigrants who feel appreciative towards the US as distancing themselves from their indigenous roots to feel "whiter" and take advantage of opportunities in the United States. Even though many are still illegal immigrants, why do these people feel their behavior has an influence on their fates? Does this change their view on law enforcement? On their freedom? Why?

—Matt N., Expert Question

### PLACEMAKING TRANSNATIONALLY

- The transnational movement of bodies has changed the form of citizenship.
- Citizenship becomes flexible and performative, rather than ascribed through birthright alone.
- · Claims of citizenship become based on spatial practices.
- Decision-making over space/place no longer exclusively contingent on landownership.
- Place-making defined through the participation in the appropriation of space, and the production of its meaning.
- · Competition over spatial claims and the rights to the production of space.

- ➤ Immigrants are maintaining ties between countries of origin and their current home countries.
  - ➤ transnational ties: social ties and networks extending or operating across national boundaries.
    - > These ties help with the flow of economic, political, and sociocultural resources.
    - ➤ How do we see these processes in *Documenting Politics?*
    - ➤ What political strategies do immigrants employ to navigate their daily lives?